

Testimony on SJ0024

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Comments for the Record on Senate Bill SJ 24

Seven False Assumptions in Senator Hawks' Closing Comment

In his final comment to the Senate Committee, Senator Hawks said he objected to criticism of scientific ideas promoted by Dr. Steve Running without his being present to "defend" himself. This comment has serious implications to science, education, freedom of speech and the worthiness of the Bill.

In my comments, I focused on scientific issues. I mentioned there were 6 fundamental scientific errors Steve Running made in his presentation to some 300 people in Kalispell on September 25, 2008. I also said 2 of them were not relevant to the Committee Hearing and I discussed the remaining 4 key scientific requirements needed to support the hypothesis of global warming.

Senator Hawks raised issue #5 that I purposely disregarded. Issue #6 has to do with Dr. Running's use of false logic known as "affirming the consequent." With all due respect to Senator Hawks, here are seven serious false assumptions in his comment:

1. He assumed the discussion of science was a trial of Dr. Running wherein he was being accused of a wrong doing. This, of course, was certainly not the case. We were only talking about scientific ideas.
2. He assumed the discussion of scientific issues is personal. Science, however, is about ideas and is impersonal. Scientists hammer each other's ideas everyday without making their critiques personal.
3. He assumed that a person's status has bearing upon how his ideas are evaluated in a scientific discussion. Dr. John Kemeny of Dartmouth was my philosophy mentor who got his PhD at age 18 and was then chosen to be "the" special assistant under Albert Einstein. Kemeny never got a Nobel Prize but his preeminence in math and philosophy is beyond dispute. Dr. Richard Feynman of Caltech, my alma mater, Nobel Prize winner in physics and a truly great scientist, taught the same scientific method. Here is how Dr. Feynman described the scientific method:

1. Look for a new law by guessing it.
2. Compute the consequences of our hypothesis.
3. Compare our prediction to nature, experiment or experience.
4. If it disagrees with experiment then it is wrong. This is the key to science.
5. **Who you are, what degrees you have, what position you have, what awards you have, etc., are irrelevant. If it disagrees with observation it is wrong!**

Senator Hawks contradicted the most important principal in science by implying that Dr. Running deserved special privileges as a "Nobel Laureate." Feynman would strongly disagree. He would say it does not matter who Dr. Running is, the ideas he has promoted about global warming are wrong. There is no defense when the scientists publish peer reviewed articles that show his ideas are wrong.

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Understanding the scientific method is not difficult. Every person who calls himself educated should understand the scientific method. To not understand it allows misconceptions. If one is a university professor or politician then these misconceptions are impressed on others to their ultimate detriment. My objection to this bill is that it incorporates scientific misconceptions.

Unfortunately, Senator Hawks' comment influenced the students present to accept a distorted view of science. To imply that Dr. Running's ideas may be correct because of his Nobel Peace Prize is incorrect.

4. He assumed a Nobel Peace Prize is an award for scientific accomplishment. Nobel Prizes in science are given in Sweden. Nobel Peace Prizes are given in Norway and are political rather than scientific. I am aware the University and even Dr. Running himself have promoted his Peace Prize as a scientific accomplishment but this does not make it so. It is not based upon a definitive work in science. It is based upon a job.

The Nobel Peace Prize, which Dr. Running shares with some 599 other people, was given to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which has as its stated mission to show that humans are causing global warming. The IPCC has distorted the input of scientists. This has led to objecting letters from scientists. In short, Dr. Running's Nobel Peace Prize is an award for distorting the truth according to the desires of government officials.

My slide handouts #17, #18 and #19 address the IPCC issue and summarize the conclusions of scientists. The Senate Committee should reread these slides to review what scientists really say because it is pretty much the opposite of what Dr. Running has publically promoted.

5. He assumed that a person must be present to defend his ideas in a scientific discussion. If this were enforced all science would stop. We are not talking about Dr. Running having to defend himself against a personal accusation. We are talking about Dr. Running's well publicized ideas on global warming. I also attacked the false ideas promoted by Al Gore. Would Senator Hawks require no one can critique the ideas of Al Gore in his absence?

There are only two things Dr. Running would be able to do if he were present: (a) admit that I correctly described his ideas or (b) say he changed his mind. I correctly described his ideas. You can check this on the University of Montana website and in his publications. His ideas are a matter of record.

Taken to its limit, the comment by Senator Hawks would affect all printed media, all talk shows, all internet discussions and, yes, Senate Hearings. Senator Hawks proposal that would requiring another person's attendance for any criticism of their well documented ideas would stop Western Civilization. Would Senator Hawks want to stop all testimony in every Senate Hearing that in any way criticized the ideas promoted by a person who is not present? What if the person is dead? Would Senator Hawks say a dead person's ideas are no longer allowed to be criticized?

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6. Senator Hawks had ample opportunity to invite Dr. Running or any other scientist to the hearing on his bill but he did not. This suggests that Senator Hawks assumed one other false idea promoted by Dr. Running, e.g., that the discussion on global warming is over. This idea conflicts with the scientific method and it ignores the thousands of qualified scientists who disagree with Dr. Running.

7. He assumed that a Senate Hearing is a suitable platform for the discussion of scientific ideas. In fact, it is impossible to discuss science at any depth in a Senate Hearing. There are other ways Dr. Running can attempt to defend his mistaken ideas other than appearing at a Senate Hearing.

First, Dr. Running can publish scientific articles that show his ideas are right. He has not done this. Until he or someone does this, Dr. Running is not speaking as a scientist when he promotes ideas that are not accepted by key scientists. He is speaking as a member of the IPCC that promotes the agenda of global warming. The danger is that Dr. Running's false science has made its way into legislation and into the actions of our Governor and it poses very serious consequences to Montana's economy.

Second, Dr. Running can attend the *2009 International Conference on Climate Change* and argue his ideas in a scientific atmosphere. I am sure he will not do this because his ideas would be soundly rejected by the some 1000 atmospheric scientists that Dr. Running prefers to believe do not exist.

Third, Dr. Running can agree to debate me one-on-one at a public forum in Missoula. I don't think he will do this either.

Ask yourself, why should you approve legislation based upon ideas that are soundly rejected by the 1000 atmospheric scientists at this conference and by the core philosophy of science?

Summary

Senator Hawks could have made a much better final comment. He could have admitted that his bill is based upon "questionable" science. He could have proposed to send four of the students to the *2009 International Conference on Climate Change* in NYC on March 8-10. Each would attend one of the four subject tracks. Each would write a report when they return home and these reports would be sent to the Senate Committee with copies to me inviting my comments.

Then, he could have added that he will revise his bill based upon the findings of the students and present it again for hearing in late March or early April. This would have shown an open mind and better project management. This would have allowed his bill to be fine tuned so it might have accomplished something useful.

Had he made this final comment, I would have very much approved his bill.

As it stands, however, I recommend disapproval of his bill because Mr. Hawks made it very clear that the study would not use science properly. He is fighting the truth. Therefore, the study would be based upon a delusion.